

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

1.946
C 76
Cap.

CONSUMER TIME

AN ELECTRICAL FANTASY

NETWORK: NBC

DATE: February 15, 1947

ORIGIN: WRC

TIME: 12:15-12:30 PM EST

(Produced by the United States Department of Agriculture. This script was prepared for broadcast and is for reference only. It may not be broadcast without special permission. The title CONSUMER TIME is restricted to network broadcast of the program...presented for more than thirteen years in the interest of the consumers.)

-oOo-

1. SOUND: CASH REGISTER RINGS TWICE...MONEY IN TILL
2. JOHN: It's CONSUMER TIME!
3. SOUND: CASH REGISTER...CLOSE DRAWER
4. ANNCR: During the next fifteen minutes the National Broadcasting Company and its affiliated independent stations make their facilities available for the presentation of CONSUMER TIME by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. And here are your inquiring consumers, Mrs. Freyman and Johnny.
5. FREYMAN: Today on CONSUMER TIME we're going to have a very practical discussion about fluorescent lights and making the best use of electricity in your home.
6. JOHN: But first...we have a story...an electrical fantasy. And what else could you expect when the heroine is a modern farm homemaker named Mrs. Aladdin? And like the original Aladdin, this lady just happens to be polishing the base of an old copper lamp.
7. MRS. A.: There...that base really shines now. Copper is so pretty. Now to plug in the lamp (PAUSE) and see how it works...
8. SOUND: LIGHT SWITCH CLICK--WIRE VIBRATING LIKE A PLUCKED HARP STRING.
9. GENIE: Good day to you, madam .

10. MRS. A: (STARTLED) Goodness ..you startled me. Who are you?
11. GENIE: I, madama, am the genie of the light. Have you never heard the story of Aladdin and the lamp?
12. MRS. A: Heard it...of course I've heard it. And I get kidded about it every time more than two people get together. Say... what's your name, anyway?
13. GENIE: My name? I have many names. All the names of those who harnassed electricity for you are part of my name...Miletus, Theophrastus, (Thee-aw-frastus), Pliny, William Gilbert... he was physician to Elizabeth the queen...Gray, du Fay, Aepinus, (Ep-pinus), Cavendish, Volta...Faraday, Galvani, Ampere and Ohm...Lord Kelvin, Ben Franklin, Tom Edison...many many more. So just call me...Genie...the culmination of your electrical heritage. I am the genie of the lamp...the original spark of electricity generated long ago...fanned and fed by experiments in every age. And now I stand a willing slave ready to obey anyone who will flip an electric switch or plug in an electrical appliance.
14. MRS.A: But you don't appear in person every time some one turns on an electric light
15. GENIE: To you alone belongs that privilege, Madam Aladdin, your name you see...
16. MRS. A: Oh. But I've been turning on electric lights all my life. And this is the first time I've met you.
17. GENIE: In other words...where have I been all your life? Well, madam, I have never felt you needed me in person before. But this time it's different.
18. MRS. A: Goodness...am I in danger?

19. GENIE: Not immediate danger...but let me show you. You have just plugged in a lamp...but not directly into a wall socket.
20. MRS. A: No...I have an extension cord with a three way plug. There just aren't enough electrical outlets in this house.
21. GENIE: Let's count how many appliances you have hooked up to one outlet. I see one lamp...two lamps...
22. MRS. A: There's another one over here. And the radio. And when I iron, I plug the iron in here too.
23. GENIE: Five connections. .all at one outlet.. Madam, some folks call that "octopus connections"...sprawling and very dangerous...
24. MRS. A: (BEWILDERED) Well, why? They all work fine.
25. GENIE: Madam...you are overloading the wires, .making them work too hard. It's usually a good idea not to have more than one or two connections to an outlet. An electric iron especially draws a fairly heavy load of current and will make the lights dimmer.
26. MRS. A: Well, why is an...an octopus connection bad?
27. GENIE: It makes it too hot for me...and the wires. Hot wires of course might start a fire that burns down your house.
28. MRS. A: I guess i'd better unhitch some of these lamps then. But we need the lamps to read by.
29. GENIE: The answer is simple...some new wall plugs.
30. MRS. A: Sounds expensive. But I know...I'll get my husband to fix some up. (BRAGGING) He's quite a good electrician when he sets his mind to it. In an amateur way...of course.
31. GENIE: Ah ..Madam...with all due respect to Mr. Aladdin's illustrious name...believe me...it is cheaper in the long run...and much safer...to call in an experienced electrician to do the job.

32. MRS. A: But my husband has done lots of wiring around the farm. You just go out and look at the lights in the chicken house.
33. GENIE: (PATIENTLY) I know...I know. .It's a big temptation for farmers to do minor wiring jobs themselves Your husband's wiring apparently works all right. The lights go on...the motors run...and so on. But the wiring may still have a mistake in it that will start a fire or give someone a bad shock.
34. MRS. A: Oh my! That's dangerous.
35. GENIE: So you see, Madam...it's good economy to get the best when it comes to wiring...and the best comes with an experienced electrician. And as long as you're calling in an electrician...you are, aren't you?
36. MRS. A: Right away.
37. GENIE: Have him check your wiring to see if it is adequate to carry the load of the new equipment. I believe you have recently acquired an electric roaster.
38. MRS. A: Yes...Would you like to see it? It's a beauty. I'll show you how it works.
39. GENIE: (HASTILY) Never mind...never mind. It will just start me quivering.
40. MRS. A: I forgot. You're so...electrical...aren't you Mr. Genie?
41. GENIE: How...discerning of you, Madam Well...I had better get on the beam and be on my way now.
42. MRS. A: Well, thank you so much for the advice about wiring. I hope we meet again some time.
43. GENIE: No doubt we will. But for now...good by...goodby...
44. SOUND: VIBRATION OF WIRE DROWNS HIM OUT.

45. FREYMAN: Johnny...I think the genie of the lamp gave Mrs. Aladdin some mighty good advice.
46. HOHN: He sure did, Mrs. Freyman. This business of hooking up electrical appliances octopus fashion is really dangerous. Besides overloading the wires...you have all those extension cords around to trip up people. And if the extension cords are worn or damaged...they're a real fire hazard
47. FREYMAN: I'm going to remember that...because extension cords are a temptation. But say, Johnny Did Mrs. Aladdin ever see the Genie again?
48. JOHN: Yes she did. One night a couple of weeks later...Mrs. Aladdin was alone in the house. She had just settled down to read a good book and turned on the reading lamp...
49. SOUND: LIGHT SWITCH CLICK--VIBRATING STRING
50. GENIE: Good evening to you, Madam.
51. MRS. A: Why...why. It must be you again...the genie of the lamp.
52. GENIE: Correct, madam.
53. MRS. A: But I can't see you this time.
54. GENIE: Here I am in your husband's favorite lounge chair. I trust he won't mind.
55. MRS. A: Oh yes.. I can just make you out. With only this reading light on, the rest of the room is too dark for seeing.
56. GENIE: Precisely why I am here, madam. You need help again.
57. MRS. A: I do?
58. GENIE: I would say, at this moment, madam, your see-ability is very poor.
59. MRS. A: My . see-ability.?

60. GENIE: How well you can see...whether you have enough light and the right kind of light.
61. MRS. A: Why Mr. Genie...this is a wonderful reading lamp. My husband gave it to me for Christmas. I love to read by it.
62. GENIE: But just the same you are straining your eyes.
63. MRS. A: Now one minute...you may think you know all there is to know about electricity. But I'm the best judge of whether this lamp gives me enough light for reading...and I say it does. So there.
64. GENIE: (PATIENTLY) Permit me...but we are differing without understanding each other. That lamp illuminates your book, yes... The light is adequate for reading...yes...but that is not the whole story. You are sitting in a spotlight in the middle of a dark room Sharp contrast between light and dark places will strain your eyes every time.
65. MRS. A: Oh...maybe that's why I couldn't focus on you when you came in.
66. GENIE: Precisely. Your see-ability was terrible. Madam...it's to your own interest that I tell you. You must have good general lighting in the room And then add a special reading lamp to throw extra light on your book or your sewing or what have you. And another thing about your reading lamp...
67. MRS. A: Now don't you go picking on my Christmas lamp again. I know you're trying to help...
68. GENIE: It's a fine lamp...very good looking. Reminds me of a lamp I knew about two centuries back.
69. MRS. A: (DOUBTFULLY) My husband did say the base was an antique. But I don't think it's that old.

70. GENIE: What I wanted to call to your attention was the lampshade. All your lampshades should be like this one. It's fine for reading.
71. MRS. A: That's what I've been telling you. (PAUSE) What makes you think so?
72. GENIE: The color. The outside of the shade can be any color you want. But the inside definitely needs to be white or a very light color...so you'll get the light you pay for. Dark colors absorb light...while white has the advantage of reflecting most of the light that strikes it.
73. MRS. A: But if you have too much light...you'll have glare. And that's no good either.
74. GENIE: Precisely. But you can avoid glare easily if you make sure that your bulbs are the right size for the fixture...that they're properly shaded...and your ceiling fixtures are high enough to be outside your direct line of vision.
75. MRS. A: Mr. Genie...may I ask you a personal question?
76. GENIE: Please do.
77. MRS. A: Do you ever read in bed?
78. GENIE: Frankly, madam, I never have time to sleep...let alone read in bed. Why do you ask?
79. MRS. A: Well, my husband likes to read in bed. So do I as a matter of fact. But I tell him it's hard on your eyes. I just want to check and make sure that's right.
80. GENIE: It needn't be bad for the eyes...not if you have enough light in the room and on the page...and if the book/^{is} in a natural position. Of course you must make sure the light doesn't shine directly in your eyes. Pin-up lamps with diffusing bowls-or some of the new shaded fluorescent pin-ups are good.

81. MRS.A: Guess I'll have to see about getting better light in the bedroom.
82. GENIE: You do that, Madam. Meanwhile, I must be off on my circuit.
83. MRS. A: Well, thank you. Drop in again. .anytime.
84. GENIE: If I see any other glaring errors...I'll be back. Farewell...
farewell...
85. SOUND: VIBRATION OF WIRE DROWNS HIM OUT
86. JOHN: Well, Mrs. Freyman, I would say Mrs. Alladin had a very...
illuminating...session with the Genie of the lamp.
87. FREYMAN: Mmm...and it's too bad we can't all have personal genies to
help us make the best use of our electrical equipment. But
Johnny.. we promised to talk about fluorescent lights...and
that's one subject i've been wondering about lately.
88. JOHN: Well, I've been down to see some of the people at the Rural
Electrification Administration...so I should be able to answer
most of your questions about fluorescent lights.
89. FREYMAN: Okay...question one...are fluorescent lights better for your
eyes than ordinary electric light bulbs?
90. JOHN: Well, fluorescent lights are softer and there's less glare.
But the experts say:
(NORMAL VOICE)
91. GENIE: / If you have the proper amount of light...with no glare...it
doesn't matter whether it comes from incandescent or
fluorescent bulbs.
92. FREYMAN: How about this business of flickering fluorescent lights? I've
heard some people say that's bad for the eyes.
93. JOHN: There's no scientific basis for that...as far as I could find
out.
94. FREYMAN: I guess people are always a little distrustful of something new.

95. JOHN: I guess so...and incidentally...the newest thing in fluorescent lights is the circular type. It looks like a halo or a doughnut. Up to now, you know, the fluorescent bulbs have been long tube-like affairs.
96. FREYMAN: Well, do circular fluorescent lights have any advantage?
97. JOHN: Mmm hmm,...they can put them in floor lamps.. or any lamps and in round ceiling fixtures.
98. FREYMAN: Now that's a nice idea. Any chance of converting an old floor lamp to fluorescent lighting?
99. JOHN: Nope...the lamp's got to be built that way right from the start.
100. FREYMAN: Now, Johnny, probably the most important question. .do fluorescent lights cost more than our regular electric light bulbs?
101. JOHN: Yes and no...
102. FREYMAN: What kind of an answer is that?
103. JOHN: Here's what the electrical engineers told me.
104. GENIE: The initial cost for the fluorescent light fixtures is higher. But you get more light with fluorescent bulbs for the same amount of electricity.
105. FREYMAN: I see...then fluorescent bulbs would give you more light for your money.
106. JOHN: Mmm hmm...you get from two to three times more light from say a forty watt fluorescent lamp than you do from a forty watt regular bulb.
107. FREYMAN: ~~~~~ Three' times more light for the same amount of money... imagine!
108. JOHN: The electrical engineers at REA put it this way. They say,

109. GENIE: Once you have the fixtures, it costs less to light your home adequately with fluorescent lamps than it does with incandescent bulbs.
110. FREYMAN: And adequate lighting is so important, Johnny.
111. JOHN: And how. When you compare the costs of lighting fixtures, lamps, and electrical bills with the treasure of good eyesight...then everybody will agree, the best is none too good.
112. FREYMAN: You know...I've been wondering too about how important fluorescent lighting will be in the house of tomorrow. In the last couple of years before the war...people were installing fluorescent lights in kitchens and laundries. But they didn't seem to think they were suitable for the other rooms.
113. JOHN: Things are different now. Some experts are recommending fluorescent lights for living room, dining room, bedroom...
114. FREYMAN: Practically the whole house.
115. JOHN: Definitely the whole house. Many of the new houses will have places for the fluorescent lights built into the walls or ceiling. so they can provide a reflected soft light. And say, Mrs. Freyman, these new fluorescent lights come in lots of different colors. There's white...soft white...daylight...red...gold...green...pink...and blue. And eventually they'll have even more colors.
116. FREYMAN: Then fluorescent lights are definitely something to think about for those lucky people who are building houses today.
117. JOHN: They're something to think about for anybody who ever hopes to build or own his own house.
118. FREYMAN: But meanwhile...I'm going to check over my house right away and make sure our see-ability is one hundred per cent.

119. JOHN: Tell you what...I've got ten questions that will help you see what kind of a score your home lighting rates.
120. FREYMAN: Okay...fire away...Are you going to give us the answers too?
121. JOHN: I think everybody knows the correct answers. The question is, though, whether you apply these principles in your own home. For instance...question one: Does your home have light colored walls and ceilings to make the best use of both daylight and artificial light?
122. FREYMAN: Hmmm!... question two.
123. JOHN: Are all your staircases well lighted?
124. FREYMAN: Three.
125. JOHN: Can you really see at your own dresser...or do you have to comb your hair in the bathroom?
126. FREYMAN: That one really strikes home. What's question four?
127. JOHN: How's the light...and the glare at your desk? Are you sure your hand doesn't throw a shadow on the paper?
128. FREYMAN: Five.
129. JOHN: Are you a shadow dodger? Do you stand in your own light at the kitchen sink?
130. FREYMAN: Six.
131. JOHN: Can your husband really see comfortably while he shaves...or does he have to do a modernistic dance?
132. FREYMAN: In other words...count his shaving nicks every day. Seven.
133. JOHN: Can you see to read when you're sitting in any chair in your living room?
134. FREYMAN: Eight.
135. JOHN: How about your children...do they have plenty of good light for their studies and play?
136. FREYMAN: Nine.

137. JOHN: Can you see as well as hear at the telephone? Can you see to look up a number in the phone book without having to carry the directory to the light?
138. FREYMAN: Ten.
139. JOHN: Do you keep bulbs and shades clean and free from dust...so you get the benefit of all the light your bulbs give?
140. FREYMAN: That makes ten questions.
141. JOHN: And if you made one hundred per cent...or even ninety per cent, you can really be proud.
142. FREYMAN: And if your see-ability is lower than that...you'd better get busy and remedy the lighting situation in your home.
143. JOHN: Now Mrs. Freyman, I have one more question for you...my weekly one...what's on CONSUMER TIME next Saturday?
144. FREYMAN: Next week..."Housekeeping Made Easy." Remember a couple of weeks ago, Johnny, we promised to devote a whole program to work simplification in the home.
145. JOHN: And next week is it.
146. FREYMAN: Right. We're going to have a special guest who will tell us how to analyze the way we do our house work...and then how to go about doing it more efficiently.
147. JOHN: I hope there will be some scientific information about cutting dish washing time.
148. FREYMAN: There probably will be.
149. JOHN: Then I'm sure everybody will want to be with us next week for another edition of
150. SOUND: CASH REGISTER
151. ANNCR: CONSUMER TIME
152. SOUND: CASH REGISTER...CLOSE DRAWER

153. ANNCR: CONSUMER TIME, written by Eleanor Milder, and directed by Frederick Schweikher, is presented by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, through the facilities of the National Broadcasting Company and its affiliated independent stations. It comes to you from Washington, D.C.

This is NBC the National Broadcasting Company.

